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Our Ref: [REDACTED]  
Your Ref: 3/2025/0517  
Date: 22 October 2025

Dear Ben

**Re: Formal Objection to Planning Application 3/2025/0517 for Regularisation of construction of a steel portal framed building for use as a pet crematorium facility (sui generis) at Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley Old Brow, Sawley, BB7 4LF**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] This letter relates to the ongoing operations taking place at Dockber Laithe Farm in relation to the use of a steel portal framed building as a pet crematorium, objections are made on the following grounds;

**1) Adverse impact – Smoke and Odour**

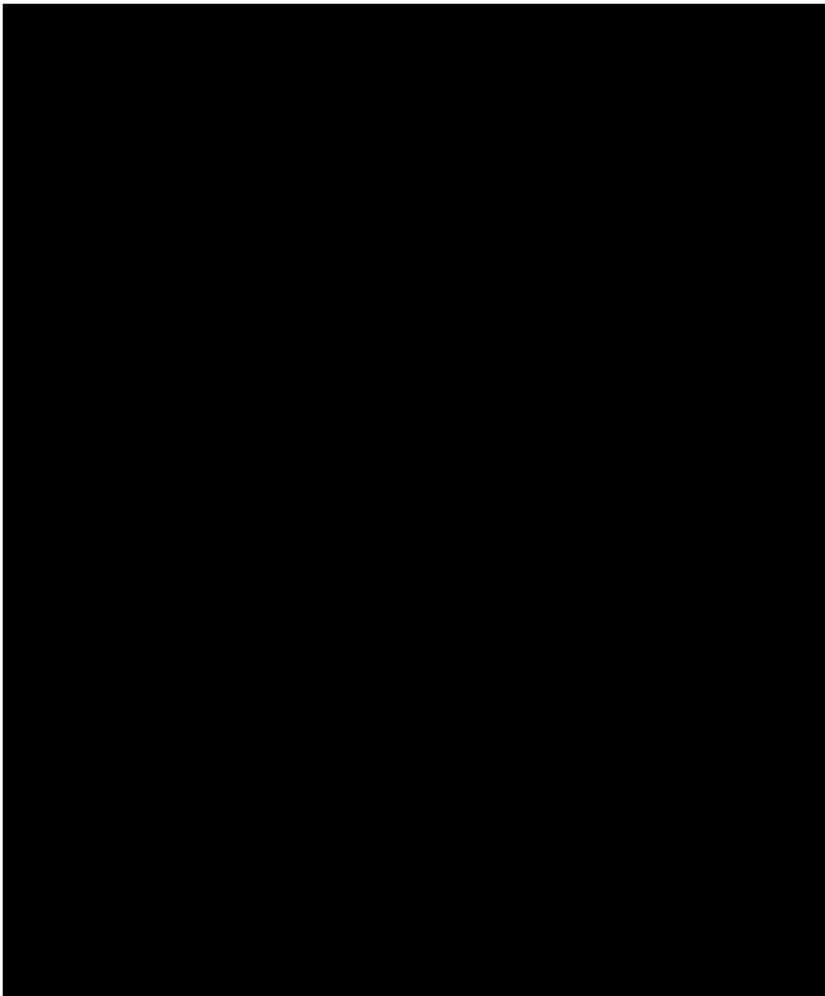
Burning takes place at the pet cremator most days from 2pm onwards. There is an odour of burning hair/flesh that fills the air; and clean wet washing on our clients washing line regularly smells of smoke. We note from the submitted Odour Assessment that there are two small animal carcass cremators in the building.

[REDACTED]

Our clients advise that the lean-to on the existing agricultural building was constructed in October 2023. They had their [REDACTED] by which time the smoke and odour problems had become apparent. [REDACTED] when a planning application would be submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) for the pet crematorium that was already up and running. [REDACTED] planning permission was not required due to Beloved Pets burning under 50kg bodyweight an hour at Dockber Laithe Farm.

[REDACTED]

Our clients have been concerned about the pet crematorium use at Dockber Laithe Farm since it first started and they were relieved when this retrospective planning application was registered in October 2025 so that they could make formal comments for consideration as part of the planning process. Our clients have been adversely affected by the continual odour of burning and associated smoke coming from the pet crematorium since the use began approximately 19 months ago, with the burning taking place most days from 2pm onwards. A video dated March 2025 is attached (separately) and a photograph is attached below. Both the video and the photograph below show flames and plumes of smoke being omitted from the pet crematorium.



Our clients have been proactive in trying to maintain the quality of life they enjoyed prior to the pet crematorium starting to operate in [REDACTED]. They have been open and upfront about their concerns and have [REDACTED] problems that they have encountered. On 1st April 2025 they were advised by the Environment Agency (EA) that the EA had been told by the owner of Beloved Pets that there had been a problem with the diesel being used by the cremator(s) that had resulted in dark plumes of smoke being omitted, but that the problem had been rectified. Our clients have explained that this problem has not been rectified permanently, [REDACTED] a contractor working at [REDACTED] building next to the pet cremator was on fire at 9.30pm at night when he saw the flames coming out of the chimney of the pet cremator. If planning permission were to be approved, our clients would be relying on regulatory bodies such as the Environment Agency to ensure that the pet cremator was not omitting harmful omissions into the atmosphere as has happened previously.

There are two static caravans sited immediately to the north of the pet cremator and the safety of any residents of those static caravans should also be a consideration.

Our clients are concerned about the intensification of non-agricultural uses occurring at Dockber Laithe Farm.

Policy DMG1 of the RVBC adopted Core Strategy (2014) states that development must be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature..... It is our clients' opinion that the pet crematorium does not meet this criteria.

## **2) Highway Safety**

The submission advises that:-

*The 'operational model' involves transfer of deceased pets from Beloved Pet's main premises in Burnley to the site at Dockber Laithe Farm. After cremation, the ashes are taken to Burnley for packaging and delivery back to clients. There will be no public access and the only vehicle movements to and from the site are that of the operators of the site, these movements are not anticipated to exceed four journeys along the existing access track leading to Dockber Laithe Farm.*

It is noted that Lancashire County Council Highways have no objections to the proposal and have referred to the site supporting an existing business established in Burnley. The consultation response also refers to one member of staff operating from the site, supported by one parking space having a negligible effect on the operation of the local highway network. The Application form specifies one employee and one parking space but no parking space is shown on the submitted plans.

It is not clear to our clients why the proposal supporting an existing business in Burnley (outside RVBC area) is a benefit. It is also unclear over what period the anticipated four journeys (covering letter submitted) will take place and further clarification about the level of activity should be sought about the number of journeys and when they will take place. If RVBC is minded to approve the submission, our clients would appreciate precise and specific wording in any conditions attached to the decision notice to ensure that the approved level of activity is clear and enforceable to prevent operations increasing without there being any mechanism for control of future breaches of planning control.

## **3) Forest of Bowland National Landscape**

Policy DMG3 of the RVBC adopted Core Strategy (2014) advises that in protecting the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now known as National Landscapes) the Council will have regard to the economic and social well being of the area. However, the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area.

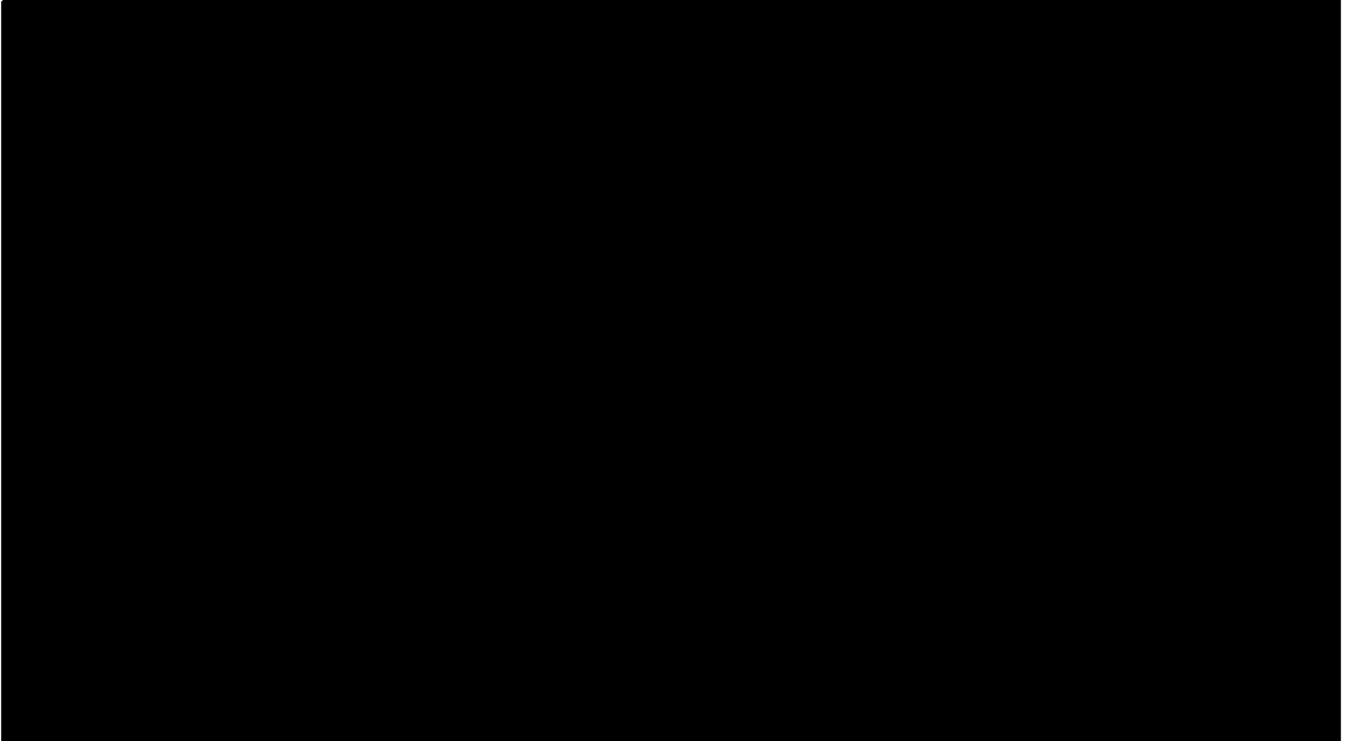
The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) was published ten years later than the RVBC Core Strategy was adopted, paragraph 189 reflects the important consideration set out in policy DMG3, stating that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, Broad and Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

Our clients are of the opinion that the siting of this pet crematorium is not in an appropriate location, within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

#### **4) Public Right of Way**

Policy DMG1 of the adopted RVBC Core Strategy (2014) requires developments to consider the protection and enhancement of public rights of way and access.

The photograph below was taken by our clients in October 2025 from bridleway BW00339020 looking south towards the pet cremator. The separation distance between the development and the footpath is approximately 45m and when the wind blows in a northerly direction footpath users will be affected by the plumes of smoke and omissions.



#### **5) Rural Economy**

Our clients note that the submitted information refers to “the applicant operating a well-established agricultural enterprise that is currently facing increasing financial pressures. These challenges stem from the phased reduction of Basic Payment Scheme support, rising production costs, and heightened market volatility”. These are issues also being encountered by our clients but it does not mean that development that is not appropriate for an open countryside setting such as this should be granted planning permission.

In this location outside a defined settlement, to be compliant with adopted RVBC Core Strategy policy DMG2 (2014), the development must meet at least one of 6 criteria set out. There are two criteria relevant to this development that the proposal does not meet (1) the development should be essential to the local economy or social wellbeing of the area; and (2) the development is for small-scale uses appropriate to a rural area where local need or benefit can be demonstrated. The proposal does not benefit the local economy or social wellbeing of the area, there is no demonstrated benefit of the operation of the pet cremator. The other 4 no. criteria set out in DMG2 are not relevant to this type of proposal.

## **6) Hours of Operation**

Our clients hear vehicles [REDACTED] during the night and the cremator(s) burning at night. The 'hours of opening' section of the submitted application form does not specify hours of operation.

## **7) Conclusion**

There could be farm diversification projects suitable for this open countryside setting within the National Landscape that our clients might be supportive of, so long as the proposal did not introduce unacceptable amenity or visual impacts for them as immediate neighbours, unfortunately this proposal is not one that they can support.

For the reasons set out above, our clients wish to object to the retrospective application for the change of use to a pet crematorium.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

